



U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement

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News Release

ICE NABS ILLEGAL WORKERS AT NAVY BASE, WHITE SANDS MISSILE RANGE, ARMY DESERT WARFARE TRAINING CENTER, AND MARINE LOGISTICS BASE -- Arrests Made in Louisiana, New Mexico, and California --

WASHINGTON, D.C.—John P. Clark, Acting Assistant Secretary for U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) announced that ICE agents have teamed up with Defense Department authorities to intercept dozens of illegal aliens in the past ten days who were performing contract work at the U.S. Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base-New Orleans in Belle Chasse, Louisiana; the White Sands Missile Range in Las Cruces, New Mexico; the U.S. Army's Fort Irwin Training Center in San Bernardino, California; and the U.S. Marine Corps Logistics Base in Barstow, California.

“Unauthorized workers who gain access to sensitive U.S. military installations through fraudulent documents or other methods pose serious homeland security threats. Not only are their identities in question, but they are also vulnerable to potential exploitation by terrorists and other criminal organizations given their illegal immigration status in this country. Removing these individuals from sensitive worksites is a priority for ICE and the Department of Homeland Security,” said ICE Acting Assistant Secretary Clark.

This morning, ICE agents screened the identification of more than 450 contractors and sub-contractors working at the Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base-New Orleans in Belle Chasse, Louisiana. ICE agents detained six illegal aliens today performing contract work at the base. The Naval Air Station had previously conducted its own investigation and formally barred more than a dozen workers from the facility. The facility later requested the assistance of ICE to further investigate employees working for contractors there. Last Thursday, ICE agents and base security intercepted 10 illegal aliens attempting to enter the Navy facility.

An ICE investigation into the hiring practices of companies performing contract work at the Bell Chasse facility is ongoing. Other agencies assisting in today's operation include the Naval Criminal Investigative Service, the U.S. Border Patrol, the Defense Criminal Investigative Service, and the Navy base police.

Yesterday, ICE agents teamed up with the White Sands Missile Range Police Department to arrest an illegal alien trying to enter the White Sands Missile Range in New Mexico to perform contract work inside the facility. ICE agents processed the individual and placed him into deportation proceedings. Police officials at the facility first sought help from ICE last month after intercepting 12 illegal aliens with fake documents attempting to enter the facility to work at a construction site inside. The ICE investigation is continuing.

On Wednesday, ICE agents took custody of six illegal aliens attempting to enter Fort Irwin, a U.S. Army desert warfare training facility in California, to perform contract work there. Base security had requested the assistance of ICE after questioning the validity of the documents presented by the illegal aliens as they attempted to enter the base for employment. ICE agents have processed and entered the aliens into removal proceedings. The ICE investigation is continuing.

Also on Wednesday, ICE agents took custody of an illegal alien attempting to enter the Marine Corps Logistics Base in Barstow, California, to perform contract work there. Security officials at the base had intercepted the individual after he allegedly presented a fraudulent driver's license and social security card to officials there. The illegal alien was arriving for his first day of work at the base on behalf of a contract company. The ICE investigation is continuing.

The arrests highlighted above are the latest in ICE's ongoing efforts to target and remove illegal aliens working at sensitive sites and critical infrastructure locations around the nation, including defense facilities, nuclear plants, chemical plants, airports, and seaports. In accordance with ICE's homeland security mission, ICE agents prioritize worksite enforcement efforts by focusing on investigations related to critical infrastructure and national security.

In recent months, ICE agents have conducted a number of worksite enforcement operations at U.S. defense facilities, including the following:

- On October 5, 2005, ICE arrested three illegal aliens who served as language instructors at the U.S. Army Special Operations Command at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. Two were criminally charged with using false documents to gain employment and making false statements. The third was charged with being in the country illegally. The employees provided instruction to U.S. Special Forces.
- On October 4, 2005, seven illegal aliens were arrested at the U.S. Air Force Base in Mountain Home, Idaho, following an investigation by ICE and the Air Force Office of Special Investigations. The men were working for Nutek Construction, which was sub-contracted to build housing on the air base.
- On August 26, 2005, ICE agents arrested six Mexican nationals at the U.S. Army's Fort Irwin in Barstow, Calif. The men were working illegally for Laurence-Hovenier, Inc., a construction company building military housing at the base. The workers, most of whom had security badges authorizing them to enter the base, were identified after agents audited the hiring records of more than 700 Laurence-Hovenier workers. The audit found that more than 40 percent of the employees on the company's payroll might not have been authorized to work in the U.S. The investigation continues.
- On July 26, 2005, ICE agents arrested six illegal aliens working at the Homestead Air Reserve Base in Homestead, Fla. The men, who were contracted by a Texas-based corporation, were working on a major runway-resurfacing project. Officers working at the Air Reserve's main gate noticed irregularities in the documents presented by the three men and called ICE for follow-up.

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ICE, the primary investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security, was established to bring a unified focus to the enforcement of U.S. immigration and customs laws, with the principal goal of preventing violations by terrorists and other criminals who threaten the nation's security.